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Whales Spout in September

Our fall program series begins with a presentation by Carole Sears of the Greenpeace Foundation. She will provide an update on her organization's efforts to protect the world's whales.

She will share with us the results of the attempt by Greenpeace to save a ninety-foot Blue Whale entangled in fishing nets off the coast of Peru and the current efforts of Greenpeace's United Kingdom Expedition off Portugal and Spain.

The award-winning documentary, "Voyage to Save the Whales," will be shown. This film gives an account of the history of the whaling industry and its potential for eliminating more of the world's whale species. Included are scenes from the 1976 expedition showing members of the Greenpeace crew in their small inflatable boats attempting to shield whales from the Russian hunters and the now-famous incident of the Russians firing an explosive harpoon at expedition members.

You are invited to attend the program which will be held Thursday evening, September 8, at 7:30 p.m. at the Northbrae Community Church, 941 The Alameda, Berkeley.

Field Trips Calendar

Wednesday, September 13 — Mini trip to **Alameda South Shore**. Meet at **8:30 a.m.** at the foot of Broadway in Alameda. Lunch is optional. Leader: Clarence Maynard. For information call Ruth Voss (525-8032).

Saturday, September 16 — San Francisco coastal area. Meet at **6:30 a.m.** in the parking lot between Middle and South Lakes in Golden Gate Park about one-tenth of a mile north of the 41st and Lincoln entrance to the park. We will explore several of San Francisco's finest fog belt areas known to attract fall vagrants and regular migrants. Bring lunch. Leader: Dan Murphy (564-0074).

Thursday, September 21 — Mini trip to the **Bay Bridge toll plaza** to look for shore birds, terns and gulls. Meet at **9 a.m.** at the Holiday Inn parking lot just west of the Powell St./Emeryville exit off the East-shore Freeway (Highway 17). No trip if it rains. Bring lunch. Leader: Ruth Dement (527-9723).

Saturday, September 23 — Pt. Reyes National Seashore area for a variety of fall migrants and vagrants. Meet at **7:30 a.m.** in the large parking lot beside the grocery store on the right side of the road in Inverness to carpool. Bring lunch. Leaders: Keiko Yamane and Betty Short. For information call Betty Short (921-3020 during work hours).

Sunday, October 1 — Tennessee Valley. Meet at **8:30 a.m.** and bring lunch. Going north across the Golden Gate Bridge take the Mill Valley exit under the Richardson Bay Bridge and in one-half mile turn left at the Tennessee Valley sign. Drive to the end of the road, about one mile. We will walk on a flat trail to see land and sea birds. Leader: Betty Short (921-3020 during work hours).

Carpooling: If you need a ride or can offer one, call Kate Partridge at 849-1931. Remember that all passengers should be willing to share expenses incident to the trips including mileage and any additional costs, such as bridge tolls, parking or entrance fees.

Pelagic Trip — Spaces are still available on the boat out of Monterey harbor on **Sunday, September 17.** Reservations may be made by calling GGAS at 843-2222.

—FIELD TRIPS COMMITTEE

Late May to Mid-July Observations

JUST A SLICE

Compared to the frenetic spring last year, only a slice of the hoped-for vagrants hit our coast, but the variety was extensive and tasty. Two distinct waves were noted: May 18-22 and May 30-June 4; the latter was of major dimensions.

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The first wave, as noted in the previous *Gull*, was highlighted by California's third **White-eyed Vireo**. The bird brightened the gloomy cypresses of the Mendoza Ranch, Pt. Reyes, for four days, May 18-22 (A&WG *et al*). Two Northern Parulas there imitated that timing. The rest of Pt. Reyes yielded two Black-and-White Warblers May 20 at the AT&T station (LCB) and May 21 at the Nunes Ranch (JM), a Tennessee Warbler at the lighthouse May 20 (JD), another Parula at the Fish Docks May 21 (JM), a beautiful male **Hooded Warbler**, among the rarest of our warblers, at Nunes on May 20 (LCB) and a White-throated Sparrow there at the same time.

Battery Wallace on the Marin Headlands produced a male **Black-throated Green Warbler** May 22 (CC), one of Northern California's very few spring records. Meanwhile South-East Farallon was recording six Tennessee Warblers May 21 (PRBO — as are all other Farallon reports), a Dickcissel May 19-21 (about the only spot in our area to expect one), an Indigo Bunting May 20 and two lost Brewer's Sparrows May 21. Between waves they added three late Varied Thrushes and a Rose-breasted Grosbeak while, interestingly enough, a **Scissor-tailed Flycatcher** lingered around Pt. Lobos, Monterey County, May 26-30 (CR, RB).

For the next five days the dam broke. An Eastern Kingbird was at Nunes May 30 (EM). A bewildered Mountain Chickadee visited the Fish Docks May 31-June 2 (KY, DS). SE Farallon had a Red-eyed Vireo June 1-4; another was found in Golden Gate Park June 6 (KY, LCB). Capturing the award for Best Bird of the wave of vagrants on the coast was Northern California's third **Yellow-throated Vireo** at Nunes June 3 (B&HL, JM *et al*). Mendocino County had its first Black-and-White Warbler at Pt. Arena June 3 (KVV) while Pt. Reyes hosted four during the wave. Tennessee Warblers were at The Willows and Fish Docks June 2-4; another three were on SE Farallon. A Northern Parula, which is really rather a tough bird here, was on SE Farallon June 3. That magic rock had three Magnolia Warblers but none was found coast-side during the wave. Instead, male Cape Mays were watched at the lighthouse June 1 (JM) and Mendoza June 2 (TB).

Another male **Black-throated Green Warbler** appeared on SE Farallon June 3-7, but surpassing that was Northern California's seventh **Yellow-throated Warbler** of the white-lored *albilora* race (the expected one here for this super-rarity) there June 4. Three Chestnut-sided Warblers put in one day stints each on SE Farallon June 3, 5 and 6. Again, Bay-breasted Warblers appeared beyond expectation; two on SE Farallon June 1-2, one June 29 and singles at the lighthouse June 1-2 (KY, SL, JM), the Abandoned Ranch June 2 (KVV) and the Fish Docks June 3 (PW, FB). A Palm Warbler, very rare in spring, stopped at SE

Farallon June 2. Two Ovenbirds were there June 2-4; others were at the Fish Docks May 31 (KY, DS) and Bodega Bay June 3 (KVV) and near Bolinas June 8 (PRBO). All of us landlubbers missed another **Mourning Warbler**—the eleventh for the state—a male on SE Farallon June 3. Frosting on the cake was a female **Hooded Warbler** there June 3-11 and a rare spring Bobolink June 3-6.

Meanwhile, back at the ranches, an American Redstart and eight Rose-Breasted Grosbeaks were recorded. SE Farallon had four more. A vagrant Indigo Bunting at The Willows June 4 (JM) was in addition to the territorial bird that is spending its second season on Limantour Road. A "Baltimore" Oriole was at the lighthouse June 1 (KY, SL, JM) and a female Summer Tanager perplexed observers June 3-4 at the Hall Ranch and Fish Docks (presumably the same bird — JM, SFB). To round things off, SE Farallon added three interesting sparrows: Grasshopper May 30-June 1, Vesper June 1 and Clay-colored June 1-3.

After that, spring vagrants came in drips and dabs. An American Redstart was at Lake Merced June 8 (DM) with others in Golden Gate Park June 24 and the Fish Docks June 26 (JM); an Eastern Kingbird was at Nunes June 18 (B&HL) and Rose-breasted Grosbeaks were in Strawberry Canyon, Berkeley, June 19 (JT) and Drake's Beach July 1 (DM). Very late was a Magnolia Warbler at Mendoza June 29 (WMP, A&WG), a Red-eyed Vireo at Bodega Bay July 4 (BDP) and a Black-and-White Warbler at Bolinas June 17 and 19, a Blackpoll Warbler June 18-20, a Magnolia and a Palm Warbler June 22 and a Vesper Sparrow June 23.

PREDICTION PRECISE

It was one of the most highly sought-after shorebirds. Indeed, knowledgeable birders had said that if it ever showed up in our area it would be at a river mouth situation in the first two weeks of June. So when Jeri Langham found the **White-rumped Sandpiper** at the mouth of the Carmel River on June 2 (for the third state and first Northern California record) there was much excitement and satisfaction. The helpful bird stayed five days. On June 11 Ron LeValley found a second bird — definitely different — at Kehoe Beach, Pt. Reyes. Can you beat that?

The only other water bird migrants of note were a Manx Shearwater at Pt. Reyes June 10 (BH) and a Franklin's Gull passing by Limantour June 18 (DD).

HUMMER'S VICE

The saga of California's first Blue-throated Hummingbird continues. After she had already fledged her first nestlings (presumably the result of a dalliance with an Anna's) she began nest re-building, as you may

recall from the last published episode. She laid and hatched two eggs but the young were dead within three days. The only male hummingbird lounging about during this encore was a Black-chinned! This promiscuity was getting silly. Perhaps she saw the error of her ways; she departed on May 27 toward Arizona, no doubt, where there are six other species including mundane male Blue-throats to try it with. (Scientists and pseudo-scientists will please forgive the anthropomorphism of the above note.)

SUMMER SPICE

But back to midsummer. A Tufted Puffin was seen at Pt. Reyes light-house July 4 (VR) in an area where they were suspected of nesting last year. Continual strong northwest winds drove pelagics shoreward. A Black-footed Albatross was in Half Moon Bay harbor July 14 (LH) and an Ashy Storm-Petrel was only a mile off the Berkeley marina in San Francisco Bay that same day (VR, LHI). Considering their remarkable expansion to the south of us perhaps it's no surprise that two **Black Skimmers** were found; late June at Moss Landing (TH) and July 9 at Palo Alto (FLR). However, there are only two previous Northern California records.

Northern California had its first **Great-tailed Grackle** beginning June 18 (JH, LCB, JM *et al*). The male hung around the Palace of Fine Arts in San Francisco subsisting on bread crumbs meant for the pigeons and directing its weird calls at an untrained audience. The prize of July was a **Worm-eating Warbler** near Jewel Lake in Tilden Park, Berkeley. The very secretive individual was discovered and verified July 11 (PG, LCB, DR *et al*) and is present at this writing (July 15). By this date the bird may represent a summering individual in prime habitat — this has been suspected once before in southeastern California. All told, this is the 23rd record for the state.

IT'S BEEN NICE . . .

. . . but not worth the price. After three and a half years of writing this column monthly, I'm passing the ink on to a new Observations Editor — Stephen F. Bailey. Steve is well known to Bay Area birders and brings wide experience to the task. You can enjoy a fresh approach and I can enjoy the rest.

Writing the column had rewards, not the least of which is feeling the pulse of Northern California birding and marveling at its fluctuations. However, as long-suffering *Gull* editors will readily second, deadlines are not much fun. I've missed a few (you can hear Nick and Nancy grumbling in the background) — it's strange how final exams, term papers and new state birds always arrive at that dreaded time. So, for now at least, it's goodbye to them and wonder at the longevity of some of my peers in this business (Janet Witzeman, Phoenix Audubon Society;

Shum Suffel, Los Angeles Audubon Society; Phil Unitt, San Diego Audubon Society) and amazement at their ability continually to write interesting copy. Of course the birds do help; they, oblivious to all this nonsense, continue to amaze us even more.

Observers: Stephen F. Bailey, Laurence C. Binford, Florence Bennett, Ron Branson, Tony Briggs, Chris Carpenter, Nancy Conzett, Donna Dittman, Jon Dunn, Al & Wilma Gbiorso, Phil Gordon, Linda Hale (LH1), Lois Harter (LH), Tom Harvey, Bob Hirt, Joel Hornstean, Bob & Hanno Lewis, Susanne Luther, Eugene Makishima, Robin May, Joe Morlan, Dan Murphy, Benjamin D. Parmeter, Point Reyes Bird Observatory (special thanks to Steve Morrell and Paul Lehman), William M. Pursell, Florence LaRiviera, Van Remsen, Charles Rodier, Don Roberson, Don Schmuldt, Jean Thomas, Kent Van Vuren, Peter Willmann, Keiko Yamane.

—DON ROBERSON, *outgoing Observations Editor*
2244 Encinal #5, Alameda, Ca 94501 (865-2462)

Editor's note: No *Gull* editor can grumble at the fine job Don has done as Observations Editor, especially when one considers that he did it while completing law school, teaching ornithology classes through the Alameda Adult School, making an all-out assault on the Year List record and missing by only two birds tying this year's record of 446 set by Guy McCaskie. Undaunted, Don went on to write a fine book about that venture, *Birder's California*, published by ABA.

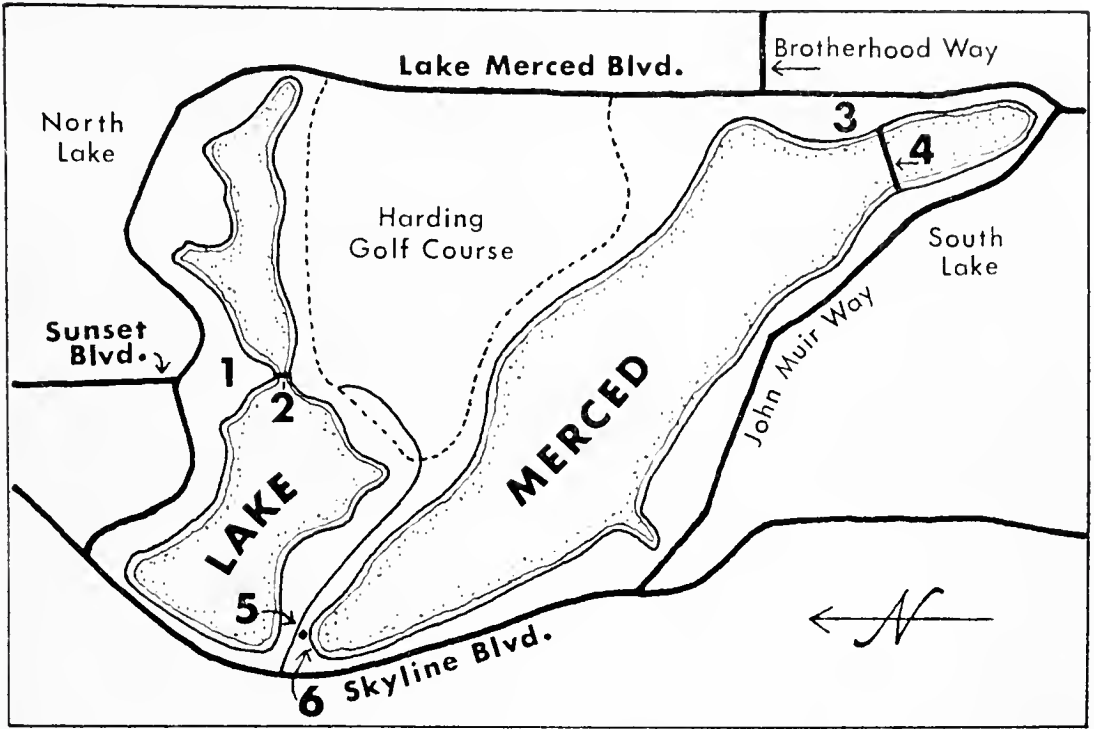
How *could* I grumble when he would call and say in his ever-pleasant way, "Guess I missed the deadline, huh? Heh-heh..." I am not the tyrant he would have you believe. Nick; now that may be another Story Thank you, Don, and welcome Steve.

Reports of rare or unusual birds may be reported to Stephen Bailey at 548-9507 or directed by mail to him c/o the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, UC Berkeley, CA 94720.

Birding Lake Merced

Lake Merced is probably the single most productive birding area in San Francisco. A variety of habitats and its proximity to the ocean provide an ever varying avian population. Located in the southwest corner of the City, it attracts large numbers of residents and migrants between September and May. Summer birding tends to be limited to common species, but these include Bank Swallows from the nearby colony at Fort Funston.

The lake is at the south end of Sunset Blvd. and at the west end of Brotherhood Way. Muni busses #70 and #72 service the area as does



SAMTRANS bus #21A. From BART it can be reached by taking the Muni bus, #91 to Stonestown and walking about a mile west to the lake. Public transportation is changing in this area and it may be worthwhile to check with local transit companies regarding current service.

NORTH LAKE

The Lake Merced Circle (#1 on map), a large parking area at the southern end of Sunset Blvd., provides excellent birding opportunities. From the Circle check the eucalyptus trees to the west for spring and fall migrants as well as Purple Finch and Cedar Waxwings. The several trails leading to a small fishing beach pass through habitat favored by a number of species of warblers, vireos, sparrows and hummingbirds. The beach is quiet, and sometimes productive when fishing is prohibited (January - April).

Return to the top of the hill and follow the trail as it circles back to the paved road leading down to the wooden foot bridge (#2 on map). The shoreline in this area should be checked for Green Herons, American Bitterns, Common Gallinule and assorted waterfowl. As the bridge comes into sight it is worthwhile to check lakeside vegetation for Long-Billed Marsh Wrens, Common Yellowthroats and Song Sparrows. The silence on the bridge is often broken by the calls of Sora and Virginia Rails in the early mornings and late afternoons. The willows on both sides of the bridge have produced unusual sightings in past years.

At the top of the hill is Harding Golf Course which has restrooms, a bar and a restaurant with an excellent view of the lake. A trail to the left follows the fairway along the bank of the lake east to Lake Merced Blvd. The chances of being hit by a golf ball outweigh the value of birding in this area so it may be best to return across the bridge to the Circle.

From the Circle walk east until you come to a trail which follows the bank of the lake and parallels the bike path. Within about a hundred yards the trail drops down to the level of the lake as it circles a small finger of the lake. This is a good place to listen for Western Grebes early in the early mornings during spring. In this little cove you can imagine being far from the City. You cannot see beyond the cove and the sounds are of a remote marsh; but by midmorning the illusion is shattered by passing ears, joggers and dogs. The hillside to the left generally provides habitat for Anna's Hummingbird, White Crowned Sparrow, Common Flicker and Scrub Jay. This area is also productive for mammals including California Ground Squirrel, Brush Rabbit, Opossum and even a glimpse of a Long Tailed Weasel may be had.

Continue along the trail as it rises abruptly to the dog running area to the east. A single Loggerhead Shrike sometimes perches on the sign or small trees. The field, infrequently used by dogs, is the only place in western San Francisco to see Western Meadowlarks with any regularity. As the trail follows the bank be sure to check the shoreline and the willows above it for roosting Black Crowned Night Herons.

Cross the field to a vantage point next to the eucalyptus grove from which to view the eastern extremity of the lake. Northern Shoveler, Cinnamon Teal, Greater Scaup and Canvasbacks can frequently be seen here in the winter and spring. American Bitterns and Cattle Egrets have been seen in this area as well.

From this point you may continue east to the end of the lake to check the Monterey cypress grove and the willow patch just past it for migrants, or return to the circle by following the bike path west.

SOUTH LAKE

Drive down Lake Merced Blvd. for 1.7 miles to a small parking area (#3 on map). Below the parking lot is a concrete fishing bridge (#4 on map) which is an excellent place to view Greater Scaup, Horned and Eared Grebes, Mew Gulls and occasional loons.

During the winters of 1976-77 and 1977-78, a Tropical Kingbird stayed here. In the past year a Franklin's Gull and a Red-necked Grebe were seen here as well. A half mile walk around the southern end of the lake can provide views of large numbers of Ruddy and Ring-necked Ducks in the fall. During other seasons birding is not too productive, but the walk is short and may produce a surprise or two.

BOATHOUSE

Continue driving around the lake for 2.0 miles to the entrance road marked Lake Mereed, Harding Park. Park in the area before reaching the boathouse (#5 on map) on the right. Restrooms, a bar and restaurant are located in the building. If you wish to fish or bird from a boat, rentals are available here as well.

The shoreline to the south is frequently used by Great Blue and Black Crowned Night Herons. Green Herons have been seen here too. The wires in the area are among the first places to find swallows in the late winter and through the spring and summer. Look here for Bank Swallows which frequent the area with the other more common species. Remaining on the south side of the road, walk down toward the piers and follow the path to the right until it ends at a small pump station (#6 on map) beneath the roadside eucalyptus grove. This is the area which has most recently produced rare fall vagrants such as Northern Parula, Northern Waterthrush, Blackpoll Warbler, etc.

The beach area across the road can be productive. At least three Common Gallinules wintered along the shoreline in this area during 1977-78. White Winged Scoter, American Wigeon, Common Goldeneye and four species of Grebes frequent this area. Black-necked Stilts, Great Egret, European Wigeon and Black Scoter have been seen in this area during the past two years.

By following the road another 1.4 miles you may return to the Circle.

HIKING

For those not interested in driving perhaps the best hike starts at the Circle, crosses the wooden foot bridge, follows the road through Harding Golf Course to the Boathouse area and from there along the bike path back to the Circle. This hike is just over 2 miles in length and passes through much of the most productive birding habitat on the lake. The entire lake may be circled by foot, but birding is not productive along much of the route.

—DAN MURPHY

Birdlife at Mono Lake: Its Uncertain Future

East of Yosemite National Park, a landscape of volcanoes, glacier-scoured canyons and snow-laden peaks is dominated by the blue expanse of Mono Lake. Its waters, filled with tiny brine shrimp, nourish millions of birds. However, its wildlife and scenic grandeur, even air quality in its vicinity, are in serious jeopardy.

Those of us who return to Mono Lake year after year, who know a little of its magic and mystery, are heartbroken at the consequences of unrestricted water diversions by the city of Los Angeles. For hundreds of thousands of years clear, rushing torrents have flowed from the flanks of the Sierra Nevada into its blue waters. Now all but one of its major tributaries are diverted into the Los Angeles aqueduct. Unless diversions are curtailed, Mono Lake will become a birdless chemical broth thirty times more alkaline than the sea.

A Lake Without an Outlet

Mono is an immense lake, a conspicuous feature on maps of California. It is exceeded in volume by only one natural lake. Roughly circular in outline, it extends thirteen miles east-west by nine miles north-south. It lies at an elevation of over 6,000 feet, where rolling, sagebrush-covered hills abut the steep, granitic escarpment of the Sierra Nevada.

Throughout most of its existence, Mono has been landlocked by peaks and volcanoes, a lake without an outlet. When Sierran glaciers advanced, the lake waxed to several times its present size and depth. As recently as 13,000 years ago tongues of ice reached its shores and icebergs drifted on its surface. During interglacial periods it retreated into its closed drainage basin, but never fell much below its current level.

Evaporation leaves behind the salts and minerals carried into Mono Lake by its tributary streams. Through the eons its water has become twice as saline and ten times as alkaline as that of the sea. Nineteenth-century travelers extolled its soap-like qualities, claiming a brief soaking could cleanse the dirtiest laundry.

Mono Lake has long been famous for the peculiar mineral formations, called tufa, scattered along its shores. Words cannot describe the singular shapes — sometimes delicate, sometimes bizarre — in which nature has fashioned these chalky white, calcareous mounds and towers. They form in the lake when calcium from freshwater springs mixes with carbonates in Mono's brine. Over the course of many years deposits of insoluble calcium carbonate accumulate as tufa and, as the lake recedes, are sculptured by water and wind.

Although most of the tufa has been left high and dry by the shrinking lake, many of the lake's springs still flow. At several places along Mono's perimeter, water gushes from tufa-lined pools and runs through gardens of mosses, sedges and flowers into the lake. As we shall see, these freshwater springs and creeklets are of critical importance to birds.

Of Birds and Brine Shrimp

The lake which Mark Twain called "solemn, silent and sailless" and the "dead sea of California" is, in reality, neither dead nor silent. Although too saline for fish, Mono Lake is teeming with other forms of

life. Brine shrimp swarm in its waters and few places on earth host greater numbers of birds.

Aquatic habitat is scarce in the arid interior of western North America and water birds crossing this region depend on Mono, Great Salt and a few other lakes for survival. Each year millions of birds visit Mono's shores during their migration, depending on the lake's bountiful food for the energy they need to cross thousands of miles of hostile desert.

Each spring for thousands of years, California Gulls have crossed the Sierra Nevada to raise their young on Mono's islands. The colony of 50,000 comprises over 95 percent of California's breeding population. In August, parents and their young may be seen soaring westward over the Sierran crest on their journey to San Francisco Bay and other coastal wintering areas.

In the late summer and fall shorebirds, waterfowl and grebes descend on Mono Lake to rest and feed during their migratory journeys. The lake is especially important to the Eared Grebe, a duck-like diving bird, and the Wilson's Phalarope, a colorful relative of the sandpipers. The birdwatcher surveying the scene may well imagine that all the Eared Grebes in western North America congregate on Mono's briny waters. Peak populations, which number at least **three quarters of a million birds**, mark the lake as the grebe's most important migratory stopover in California. More than 90,000 Wilson's Phalaropes have been tallied in a single day, and at least one-third of the world's population alight on Mono Lake during their southward migration. Thousands of ducks and shorebirds, especially Pintail, Shovelers and American Avocets, visit Mono's shores during their migrations. Thirty-one species of shorebird have been recorded.

Birds visiting Mono are faced with the problem of secreting salt solutions at least as concentrated as the water they ingest while feeding. Hence most species require fresh water. Large numbers drink and bathe at springs, ponds and creeks along Mono's shores. Without these sources of fresh water, birds would cease to visit the lake.

An Endangered Environment

Engineering skill has conspired with the water demands of a metropolis 300 miles distant to jeopardize the future of Mono Lake. Since 1941, water from Lee Vining, Walker, Parker and Rush creeks — four of the five major streams feeding the lake — has been diverted into the Los Angeles aqueduct. Any traveler surveying the scene from Highway 395 can see the consequences; Mono's shores are marked by a conspicuous band of white, barren alkali-encrusted rocks and sand, a "bathtub ring" left by the shrinking lake.

Since diversions began, Mono Lake has fallen at an average rate of one

to two feet per year. By 1978, the lake had fallen more than 35 feet, salinity had almost doubled and 10,000 acres of alkali-encrusted lake-bottom had been exposed.

In immediate jeopardy are the Negit Island California Gull rookeries. Gulls, like other colonial water birds, are highly susceptible to predators. Until this year, Mono's briny water protected Negit's gulls from coyotes, weasels, raccoons, snakes and even rats and mice. Now the emergence of a landbridge has breached their sanctuary. No major rookery exists on a peninsula. Unless Negit is restored as an island, it is only a matter of time until the colony is destroyed.

Fortunately Negit's gulls have received a brief reprieve. In March, 1978, the National Guard blasted a channel through the landbridge. But this is only a short-term solution. Within a few years, the island will once again be connected to the mainland. Unless the lake's level is stabilized, the gulls are doomed.

If diversions are not reduced, Mono Lake will continue to shrink until the middle of the next century. When it finally stabilizes at one-fourth its present volume, it will truly have become a "dead sea." Salts and minerals will become an intolerable burden to birds before the end of the century and even their sources of sustenance, the brine shrimp and brine flies, will probably disappear.

In place of the birds we will have the dust. Already windswept alkali clouds have been mistaken by airline pilots for volcanic eruptions. As Mono recedes, it will expose another 20,000 acres of fine-textured, lake-bottom sediment to the sun and the wind. The dust's alkaline chemistry threatens the health of plants and animals — including us.

A compromise must be reached between human water consumption and environmental preservation. If Mono Lake were maintained at its 1976 level, it would still permit an average annual diversion of approximately 25,000 acre-feet for human use. The islands would remain islands, millions of birds would still have a place to nest, rest and feed, and the eastern Sierra would not be plagued with air pollution. Future generations of people would inherit, not a sterile wasteland, but a living lake set in the midst of natural splendor.

Mono Lake Needs Your Help

Tell your friends and elected representatives about Mono's plight. Visit the lake and learn firsthand how water diversions are affecting this awesomely beautiful region. Write to the Mono Lake Committee (P.O. Box 2764, Oakland, CA 94602) and support our efforts to preserve the lake and its birdlife.

—DAVID GAINES

Conservation Notes

TIME AND ALASKA LANDS. Time is running out for Alaska wild lands — Congress' deadline for settlement of the issue is December 1, 1978. The bill to preserve wilderness is presently being weakened and amended in Senate committees by a coalition of special interest groups, notably the big oil lobby, led by the two Alaska senators, Ted Stevens (R) and Mike Gravel (D).

For instance, the weakened bill would allow the Arctic National Wildlife Range to be opened for gas and oil exploration and eventual development, disrupting both the calving grounds of the great Porcupine caribou herd and the denning of a major polar bear population.

S-1500, the Senate version of H.R. 39 originally introduced by Montana's late senator Lee Metcalf, has been reintroduced in revised form as Amendment 2176 by Senator John Durkin (D-N.H.) and ten colleagues. The Metcalf-Durkin bill is a stronger version of H.R. 39 and has the support of the Alaska Coalition. It would protect 110.5 million acres of Alaska's public lands in the national park, wildlife refuge, wild and scenic river and national forest systems.

A flood of messages from citizens in every state convinced the House to vote the national interest in protecting our last great wilderness frontier; now it's time to convince the Senate.

Please ask our senators for prompt consideration of the Alaska legislation. Urge opposition to any attempts at filibusters or weakening amendments. Let them know you want a strong Alaska bill.

NEGATIVE FOREST SERVICE RARE II REPORT. As expected, the U.S. Forest Service has released a RARE II draft environmental impact statement heavily prejudiced against wilderness status for roadless lands now under its jurisdiction.

The Forest Service has been directed to "review and evaluate" all of its "roadless areas" (hence the acronym RARE) for possible inclusion as wilderness. More than six million of these potential wilderness areas are here in California.

The release of the draft EIS signals a second period of public involvement. Last summer, during the first period, the timber industry organized and supported protests and mail-ins opposing most wilderness proposals. Although recent public opinion polls have shown strong support by the American people for preserving wildlands, the majority of comments received by the Forest Service were negative.

The second public involvement process closes October 1. Copies of the state and regional draft EIS supplements are available from local Forest Service offices. (Copies are also available to be read at the GGAS office.)

The Forest Service is holding "open house" meetings at local offices and in certain cities. Write to the Forest Service specifying areas you think should be protected or simply tell them you care about preserving national forest wildlands. Write: U.S. Forest Service, Regional Forester, 630 Sansome Street, San Francisco, CA 94111.

NEW BALD EAGLE REFUGE. Almost 6,000 acres of land in Siskiyou County have recently been established as the Three Sisters Bald Eagle Refuge.

One of the biggest populations of Bald Eagles in the United States is concentrated in the area from November to early April. Last year a total of 498 birds were counted.

The Three Sisters Refuge, comprised of 960 acres purchased by the National Wildlife Federation and an adjoining 5,000 acres of U.S. Forest land, is just west of the Lava Beds National Monument.

END OF THE WILD STANISLAUS? The long and hard fought battle to save the scenic Stanislaus River from water developers and the Army Corps of Engineers is nearing its conclusion. Friends of the River (FOR) in Sacramento is working hard to get Interior Secretary Cecil Andrus to agree to limit the filling of the new Melones Dam, thus preserving the upper part of this much visited river in its natural state.

Filling is scheduled to begin in November and FOR is urging all interested persons to write to Secretary Andrus, Governor Brown and President Carter. For more information write or call Friends of the River, 401 San Miguel Way, Sacramento, CA 95814, 916-451-9955.

BLM's ORV REGULATIONS NEED SUPPORT. The Bureau of Land Management's proposed off-road vehicle regulations for the 443 million acres of National Resource Lands were made public in July. The proposals are similar to those in force in the National Forests. They would require BLM to designate all of its considerable lands as "open," "regulated" or "closed" to ORV use. They authorize the Bureau to make emergency closures in areas where ORV use "is causing or will cause considerable adverse effects upon soil, vegetation, wildlife habitat, cultural resources or historical resources."

Public comments are requested before the middle of this month. If you feel strongly about unregulated ORV use on public lands write Director(210), BLM, 1800 C Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20240.

—CONSERVATION COMMITTEE

Fall Birding Classes

GGAS will sponsor the following Ornithology classes:

Albany

Stephen Bailey, new *Gull* Observations Editor who just completed his Ph.D. in Zoology at UCB, will conduct four classes through the Albany Adult School during the ten-week fall quarter. These classes will emphasize techniques of field observation and description of birds and their behavior while teaching recognition of California birds and bird identification. Various habitats will be visited during field sessions.

Consequences of Proposition 13 require that classroom and field sessions be offered as separate courses, but it is strongly recommended that students take both classroom and field sections at the appropriate level because they are designed to complement each other.

The beginning classroom course will meet from 1-3 p.m. on Monday with beginning field sessions on Wednesday, 8-11 a.m. Intermediate level courses (for those who have observed some birds previously) meet on Thursday from 7:30-9:30 p.m. (classroom) and Saturday from 8-11 a.m. (field).

The first week of classes is September 18-23.

For more information call the school at 526-6811.

Piedmont

Susanne Luther will again teach her well-attended classes through the Piedmont Adult School for an eight-week session which runs from September 25 to November 18. Evening classes will be taught on Tuesday from 7-9:30 p.m. with weekend field trips. The evening classes feature discussions and slides stressing field identification and general ornithology; the weekend field trips are oriented to the exploration of the varied birdlife of California.

Susanne will also lead Thursday morning hikes, 9 a.m.-12 noon. The class will meet in the field at various spots around the Bay Area to explore local birdlife and experience the excitement of fall migration.

For information call the school at 653-9454.

San Francisco

Joe Morlan will continue his popular classes through the Galileo-Marina Community College. The beginning class starts Tuesday, September 5; an intermediate class starts Wednesday, September 6, and the advanced class starts Thursday, September 7.

All classes meet weekly from 7 p.m.-9:30 p.m. in room 254 of the

Marina Junior High School for eighteen weeks. The school is at the corner of Fillmore and Bay streets and there is ample free parking in the lot just east of the school off Bay Street.

The beginning class is designed for those who have had no previous experience birdwatching but would like to become acquainted with the many common birds found in the Bay Area. This course stresses the major characteristics of the native avifauna and bird habitat communities.

The intermediate class continues in a systematic treatment of water birds found in California beginning with Loons. The advanced class treats land birds starting with Swallows. Both are suitable for those who wish to sharpen their field identification skills.

All classes feature the use of wild bird slides to illustrate their identification. Optional field trips may be arranged on weekends to observe wild birds in their natural habitats.

To register just come to the first class for the course you wish to take. For further information call the college at 885-0660.

Golden Gate Audubon Society Tours for 1979

GGAS will sponsor the following tours in 1979. They are designed as natural history and/or birding tours and are open to members and friends on a first-come first-served basis. For more information call the person or organization listed as responsible for each tour.

These tours have all been carefully selected by GGAS and offer leaders with experience in the areas covered. Past tours sponsored by GGAS have been very successful and were enjoyed by all participants.

New Zealand: The Seldom Seen Land December 13-January 6, 1978-9

A natural history tour for birders and botanists alike. Visit Mt. Cook, Stewart Island and other outstanding natural areas and national parks and enjoy a leisurely four-day walk on the famous Milford Track. Limited to 16 persons; \$2,125 per person. Leaders: Dan and Sally Campbell plus local naturalists. For information call Dan Campbell, College of Marin, 485-9581.

Birding in Western Mexico February 5-13, 1979

This is a tour to some of the best birding spots in western Mexico. Travel up the Durango Highway for mountain birds, to the San Blas area for jungle species and to stops in between for other birds. 8-15

people; \$600-\$650 per person from Mazatlan. Leader: Kenn Kaufman (and possible Mike Wihler). For information call Mike Wihler at 664-6567.

Sea of Cortez

April 21-28, 1979

A natural history tour by boat of this fascinating area. Explore unique islands, coves and remote beaches. See and photograph some of the birds and mammals that are a part of this starkly beautiful wilderness. 15-25 people; \$610 per person from San Diego. For information call Adventures International, 531-6564.

Humpback Whale Adventure, Maui, Hawaii

April 7-15, 1979

Visit Haleakala National Park, the world's largest dormant volcano, take a walking tour of the town on Lanaina once famous as the whaling capitol of the mid-Pacific, board a motor/sailing vessel to observe and photograph the whales. 10-25 people; \$495 per person. Leader: Gail Clark. For information call Adventures International, 531-6564.

Southern Florida Birding Tour

May 5-13, 1979

A birding trip to look for all the specialties of southern Florida, the Keyes and the Dry Tortugas. Some of the birds to be expected include Sooty and Noddy Terns, Swallow-tailed Kite, Gray Kingbird plus the chance of picking up a rare accidental or two. 10-15 people; \$110 plus expenses. Leaders: Mike Wihler and Kenn Kaufman. For information call Mike Wihler at 664-6567.

Southeastern Arizona Birding Special

June 24-30, 1979

Visit one of the best birding spots in North America. Some of the birds to be found here are seen nowhere else north of the Mexican border. See Trogons, various Flycatchers and Hummingbirds by the score. This is a near repeat of a very successful 1977 trip when 175+ species were seen. 10-12 people; \$60 plus expenses. Leader: Kenn Kaufman. For information call Mike Wihler, 664-6567.

The following two trips are still being planned and final arrangements should be made by mid-September, 1978. Call Forum Travel, 843-8294, for details.

Galapagos and Peru

August 2-23, 1979

Visit the Galapagos Islands and see firsthand the wildlife that brought about Darwin's theory of evolution plus the unique beauty that surrounds this natural area. Then go to Machu Picchu in the Andes and the Explorer's Inn in the Peruvian Amazonas. 15-25 people.

Africa — Tanzania and Madagascar

June or November, 1979

This will be a birding trip about three weeks in length. Tanzania is well-known for its bird and animal life and the island of Madagascar is a world within a world where most of the wildlife is endemic, including around 95-100 species of birds. The trip will be led by Don Turner, an outstanding authority on the wildlife of this region. Limited to 12-14 people.

—EXTENDED FIELD TRIPS COMMITTEE

Gifts and Bequests

FOR ALAMEDA-SAN LEANDRO NATURE FUND

In honor of
Leora Feeney

Gift of
Elsie Roemer

FOR GGAS

In memory of
Mabel McIntire

Donna and Frank Peralta
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In memory of
Frank A. Waring

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FOR AUDUBON CANYON RANCH

In memory of
Newell Armsby

Martha Henderson

Memorial and honorary gifts and bequests will be used as specified by the donors. Acknowledgement will be made in *The Gull* and personally by the Corresponding Secretary, Minnie Groshong. Please send checks made out to the Golden Gate Audubon Society to: Corresponding Secretary, GGAS, 2718 Telegraph Avenue, Berkeley, California 94705. All gifts are tax deductible.

Attention GGAS Members:

National Audubon Society has increased membership dues effective September 1, 1978. It is imperative that all members of GGAS review the following table concerning the new *dues split* (money the local chapters receive from each National membership) which will occur because of this and be cognizant of how these changes affect our chapter. Two very important factors should be noted:

1. If new members join through the GGAS office our chapter *will not* lose \$3.00 the first year.

2. By renewing your membership on time GGAS *will not* be penalized \$3.00 (lapsed memberships are considered new memberships by National if renewed after six months). GGAS Membership Chairwoman Maybelle Groshong will be sending out reminder letters if your membership is lapsing. *Please* renew promptly to avoid loss of revenue for your chapter.

If there are any questions please contact the Executive Director, Vera Paraschak at the GGAS office (843-2222).

—GGAS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

PRESENT DUES STRUCTURE

DUES STRUCTURE EFFECTIVE 9/1/78

Category	Present Dues	Present Chapter Share	Dues	Chapter Share*	
				2nd yr.+	1st yr.
Student	\$ 8.50	\$ 1.75	\$ 13.50	\$ 3.50	.50
Sr. Citizen Ind.	12.00	4.00	13.50	3.50	.50
Sr. Citizen Fam.	15.00	6.00	15.00	5.00	2.00
Individual	15.00	5.00	18.00	6.00	3.00
Family	18.00	7.00	21.00	7.00	4.00
Sustaining	30.00	13.00	30.00	10.00	7.00
Supporting	50.00	20.00	50.00	15.00	12.00
Contributing	100.00	40.00	100.00	30.00	27.00
Donor	250.00	60.00	250.00	75.00	72.00
Life	1,000.00	100.00	1,000.00	100.00	97.00
Dual Life	1,500.00	100.00	1,500.00	100.00	97.00

*In the first year of all new annual memberships, \$3.00 will be retained by National Audubon Society. Chapters will receive a \$3.00 refund for each new member they can show they have actually secured.

Treasurer's Report Available

The Treasurer's annual report along with a commentary and analysis by the Finance Committee for the fiscal year 1977-78 are available upon request from the GGAS office. The audit is also available for review upon request.



Golden Gate Audubon Society, Inc.

Office: 843-2222

2718 Telegraph Avenue, #206
Berkeley, California 94705

Return Postage Guaranteed

THE GULL

September 1978

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Rare Bird Alert compiler, Joseph Morlan (654-1358)

Executive Director, Vera Paraschak (843-2222)

Librarian, Lisa Johnsen (843-2222)

Mail for all individuals listed above should be sent to the GGAS office.

Send address changes to office promptly; Post Office does not forward *THE GULL*. Monthly meetings: second Thursday, 7:30 p.m. Joint membership — local and national \$18 per year (individual); \$21 (family); includes *AUDUBON* Magazine and *THE GULL*; to join, make checks payable to National Audubon Society and send to GGAS office to avoid delay in receiving *THE GULL*. Membership renewals should be sent directly to the National Audubon office. Subscriptions to *THE GULL* separately \$4 per year; single issues 40¢. High school and college student membership \$13.50 per year. Senior citizen individual, \$13.50, senior citizen family, \$15.50.

The Golden Gate Audubon Society, Inc. was established January 25, 1917, and became a chapter of National Audubon in 1948.

***The Gull* deadline is the first of the month for the following month.**